

UNDER THE ROSE

BY FREDERIC S. ISHAM.

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CHAPTER XXII.

THE TALE OF THE SWORD.

The slanting rays of the sinking sun shot athwart the valley, glanced from the tile roofs of the homes of the peasantry, and illumined the lofty towers of a great manorial chateau. To the rider, approaching by the road that crossed the smiling pasture and meadow lands, the edifice set on a mound—another of Francis's transformations from the gloomy fortress home—appeared regal and splendid, compared with the humbler houses of the people lying prostrate before it. Viewed from afar, the town seemed to abase itself in the presence of the architectural pre-eminence of that monarch of buildings. Even the sun, when it withdrew its rays from the miscellaneous rabble of shops and dwellings, yet lingered proudly upon the noble structure above, caressing its imposing and august outlines and surrounding it with the glamour of the after-glow, when the sun sank to rest.

Into the little town, at the foot of the big house, rode shortly before nightfall the jester and his companion. During the day the young girl had seemed diffident and constrained; she who had been all vivacity and life, on a sudden fell silent, or when she did speak, her tongue had lost its sharpness. The weapons of her office, bright sarcasm and irony, or laughing perfidage, were sheathed; her fine features were thoughtful; her dark eyes introspective. In the dawning sunshine, the memory of their ride through the gorge; the awakening of the shepherd's hut; something in his look then, something in his accents later, when he spoke her name while she professed to sleep—seemed, perhaps, unreal, dreamlike.

His first greeting that morning had been a swift, almost questioning, glance, before which she had looked away. In her face was the freshness of dawn; the grace of springtide. Overhead sang a hawk; at her feet a brook whistled; around them solitude, vast, infinite. He spoke and she answered; her reserve became infectious; they ate their oaten cakes and drank their wine, each strongly conscious of the presence of the other. Then he rose, saddled their horses and assisted her to mount. She appeared overanxious to leave the shepherd's hut; the jester, on the other hand, cast a backward glance at the poplar, the hovel, the brook. A crisp, clear calling of birds followed them as they turned from the lonely spot.

So they rode, pausing betimes to rest, and even then she had little to say, save once when they stopped at a rustic bridge which spanned a stream. Both were silent, regarding the horses splashing in the water and clouding its clear depths with the yellow mud from its bed. From the cool shadows beneath the planks where she was standing, tiny fish, disturbed by this unwonted invasion, shot forth like darts and vanished into the opaque patches. Half dreamily watching this exodus of flashing life from covert nook and hole, she said unexpectedly:

"Who is it that has wedded the princess?"

For a moment he did not answer; then briefly related the story.

"And why did you not tell me this before?" she asked when he had finished.

"Would you have credited me—then?" he replied, with a smile.

Quickly she looked at him. Was there that in her eyes which to him robbed memory of its sting? At their feet the water leaped and laughed; curled around the stones, and ran on with dancing bubbles. Perhaps he returned her glance too readily; perhaps the recollection of the ride the night before—recurred over vividly to her, for she gazed suddenly away, and he wondered in what direction her thoughts tended, when she said with some reserve:

"Shall we go on?"

They had not long left the brook and the bridge, when from afar they caught sight of the regal chateau and the clustering progeny of red-roofed houses at its base. At once they drew rein.

"Shall we enter the town, or avoid it by riding over the mead?" said the jester.

"What danger would there be in going on?" she asked. "Whom might we meet?"

Thoughtfully he regarded the shining towers of the royal residence. "No one, I think," he at length replied, and they went on.

Around the town ran a great wall, with watchtowers and a deep moat, but no person questioned their right to the freedom of the place; a sleepy soldier at the gate merely glanced indifferently at them as they passed beneath the heavy archway. Gabled houses, with a tendency to incline from the perpendicular, overlooked the winding street; dull, round panes of glass stared at them, fraught with mystery and the possibility of spying eyes behind; but the thoroughfare in that vicinity appeared deserted, save for an old woman seated in a doorway. Before this grandeur, whose lack-luster eyes were fastened steadfastly before her, the fool paused and asked the direction of the inn.

"Follow your nose, if nature gave you a straight one," cried a jeering voice from the other side of the thoroughfare. "If it be crooked, a blind man and a dog were a better guide."

The speaker, a squat, misshapen figure, had emerged from a passage turning into the street, and now stood, twirling a fool's head on a stick and gazing impudently at the newcomers. The crone whom the peasant had addressed remained motionless as a statue.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the oddity who had volunteered this malaprop response to the jester's inquiry. "Yonder sign post—pointing to the aged dame—has lost its fingers—or rather its ears. Better trust to your nose."

"Triboulet!" exclaimed Jacqueline.

"Is it you, lady bird?" said the surprised dwarf, recognizing in turn the maid. "And with the pleasant, staring hard at the fool. Then a cunning look gradually replaced the wonder depicted on his features. "You are fleeing from the court; I toward it," he remarked, jeeringly.

"What mean you, fool?" demanded the horseman, sternly.

"That I have run away from the duke, fool," answered the hunchback. "The foreign lord dared to beat me—Triboulet—who has only been beaten by the King. Sooner or later must I have fled, in any event, for what is Triboulet without the court; or the court, without Triboulet?" his indignation merging into arrogant vainglory.

"When did you leave the duke?" asked the other, slowly.

"Several days ago," replied the dwarf, gazing narrowly at his questioner. "Down the road. He should be far away by this time."

Suspiciously the duke's jester regarded the hunchback and then glanced dubiously toward the gate through which they had entered the town. He had experienced Triboulet's duplicity and malice, yet in this instance was disposed to give credence to his

story, because he doubted not that Louis of Hochfeld would make all haste out of Francis's kingdom. Nor did it appear unreasonable that Triboulet should pine for the excitement of his former life; the pleasures and gaiety which prevailed at Fools' Hall. If the hunchback's information were true, they need now have little fear of overtaking the free baron and his following, as not far beyond the chateau town the main road broke into two parts, the one continuing southward and the other branching off to the east.

While the horseman was thus reflecting, Triboulet, like an imp, began to dance before them, slapping his crooked knees with his enormous hands.

"A good joke, my master and mistress in motley," he cried. "The King was weak enough to exchange his dwarf for a demoiselle; the latter has fled; the monarch has neither one nor the other; therefore is he, himself, the fool. And thou, mistress, art also worthy of the madcap bells," he added, his distorted face upturned to the jester.

"How so?" she asked, not concealing the repugnance he inspired.

"Because you prefer a fool's cap to a King's crown," he answered, looking significantly at her companion. "Wherein you but followed the royal preference for head-coverings. Ho! ho! I saw which way the wind blew; many those witlings have kindled when they rested on you; how the wings of Madame d'Etampes's coif fluttered like an angry butterfly. Know you what was whispered at court? The reason the countess pleaded for an earlier marriage for the duke? That the princess might leave the sooner—and take the jester, her maid, with her. But the King met her maid, ever with another. He granted the favorite's request—but kept the jester."

"Silence, rogue!" commanded the duke's fool, wheeling his horse toward the dwarf.

"And then for her to turn from a throne-room to a dungeon," went on Triboulet, satirically, as he retreated. "As Brusquet wrote: 'twas:

"'Morbieu! A merry monarch and a jester's fair;

A jester's fair, I wot!"

But ere the hunchback could finish this scurrilous doggerel of the court, over which he cast a backward glance at the hovel, the brook. A crisp, clear calling of birds followed them as they turned from the lonely spot.

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to the window and looked out. When she spoke again her voice had regained its self-command.

"A dark night," she said mechanically.

"Jacqueline," he asked, glancing up from the blade, "why in the crypt that day we escaped did you pause at that monument?"

Quickly she turned, gazing at him from the half darkness in which she stood.

"Did you see to whom the monument was erected?" she asked in a low voice.

"To the wife of the constable. But what was Anne, Duchess of Dubrois, to you?"

"She was the last lady of the castle," said the girl softly.

Again she surveyed the jeweled emblem on the sword, mocking reminder of a glory gone beyond recall.

"And how was it, mistress, the castle was confiscated by the King?" he continued, after a pause.

"Shall I tell you the story?" she asked, her voice hardening.

"If you will," he answered.

"Triboulet's description of the scene where the constable braved the King, insisting on his right, was true," she observed, proudly.

"But why had the noble wearer of this sword been deprived of his feudality and tenure?"

"Because he was strong and great, and the King feared him; because he was noble and handsome, and the Queen Regent loved him. It was not her hand only, Louise of Savoy, Francis's mother, offered, but—the throne."

"The throne?" said the wondering fool.

Quickly she crossed the room and leaned upon the table. In the glimmer of the candles her face was soft and tender. He thought he had never seen a sweeter or more womanly expression.

"But he refused it," she continued, "for he loved only the memory of his wife, Lady Anne. She, a perfect being. The other—what?"

On her features shone a fine contempt.

"Then followed the endless persecution and spite of a woman scorned," she continued, rapidly. "One by one, his honors were wrested from him; he was banished; the flag triumphantly through Italy was deprived of the government of Milan and replaced by a brother of Madame de Chateaubriant, then a favorite of the King. His castle, lands, were confiscated, until, driven to despair, he fled and allied himself with the Emperor. 'Traitor,' they called him. He, a Bayard."

A moment she stood, an exalted look on her features; tall, erect; then stepped toward him and took the sword. With a bright and radiant glance she surveyed it; pressed the hilt to her lips, and with both hands held it to her bosom. As if fascinated, the fool watched her. Her countenance was upturned; a moment, and it fell; a dark shadow crossed it; beneath her lashes her eyes were like night.

"But he failed because Charles, the Emperor, failed him," she said, almost mechanically. "And broken in spirit, met his death miserably in exile. Yet his cause was just; his memory is dearer than that of a conqueror. She, a queen mother, is dead; God alone may deal with her."

More composed, she resumed her place in the chair on the other side of the table, the sword across her arm.

"And how came you, mistress," he asked, regarding her closely. "In the pleasure palace built by Francis?"

"When the castle was taken, all who had not fled were a gamekeeper and his little girl—myself. The latter—ironically—'pleased some of the court ladies. They commended her wit, and gradually she advanced to the high position she occupied when you arrived,' with a strange glance across the board at her listener.

"And the gamekeeper—your father—is dead?"

"Long since."

"The constable had no children?"

"Yes; a girl who, it is believed, died with him in Spain."

The entrance of the servant to remove the dishes interrupted their further conversation. As the door opened, from below came the voices of newcomers, the impatient call of tipplers for ale, the rattle of dishes in the kitchen. Wrapped in the recollections the conversation had evoked, to Jacqueline the din passed unnoticed, and when the rosy-cheeked lass had gone—it was the jester who first spoke.

"What a commentary on the mockery of fate that the sword of such a man, so illustrious, so unfortunate, should be entrusted to a fool!"

"Why," she said, looking at him, her arms on the table, "you drew it bravely, and—once more bravely—kept it sheathed."

His face flushed. She half smiled; then placed the blade on the board before him.

"There it is."

Above the sword he reached over, as if to place his hand on hers, but she quickly rose. Absently he returned the weapon to his girdle. She took a step or two from him, nervously; lifted her hand to her brow and breathed deeply.

"How tired I feel!" she said.

"Immediately he got up. 'You are worn out from the journey,' he observed, quickly.

But he knew it was not the journey that had most affected her.

"I will leave you," he went on. "Have you everything you need?"

"Everything," she answered carelessly.

He walked to the door. The light was on his face; he remained shaded.

"Good-night," she said.

"Good-night, Jacqueline, Duchess of Dubrois," he answered, and, turning, disappeared down the corridor.

[To be Continued To-morrow.]

THE LATEST FROM YALE.

Athletic Young Men's Fad Has a Beneficial Bearing.

At last we have news from Yale that is worth recording. Students of that venerable institution have recently invented a new fad, and current reports assure us it is already becoming popular; may the infection spread to every city, village and hamlet in the Union; may it wax stronger as its sphere of influence broadens; may age add to its vigor and the years crown it with merited laurel, the fad, I mean, for since the school was founded in the eighteenth century it has given the world nothing so important. May it grow in favor until the remotest corners of the earth come under its sway; may all this happen and more, for in this is salvation for Jew and gentile! I refer to the fashion of going about bareheaded. How the fad originated, or what the object of its author I know not, nor do I greatly care; all that interests the public is the fact that a great and beneficent movement has been inaugurated.

But why this eulogy? The question is a natural and proper one, and my purpose is to answer it, calmly and without prejudice. The truth, bluntly stated, is this: We are rapidly becoming a hairless, toothless race. Hairiness as a natural result of hat-wearing. Toothlessness from the vicious habit of eating mush and gruels made from the so-called "Prepared Foods" that require no chewing. But never mind, Yale has come to the rescue of our scalps, and I do not but her next step will be to save our molars.

I am assured by those who know that there has never been an instance recorded of a man losing his hair except by the ingenious process lately in vogue among our brethren of the wigwam, who persistently refused to cover his head in winter or summer.

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Women's Oxfords, in the most up-to-date styles and shapes. Goodyear welt and hand-sewed turns, Louis XV Militaire, Cuban and low heels, button and lace Oxfords, Toilets and Prince Alberts. The leathers are patent kid, bright vici kid and dull kid.

\$3 and \$3.50 Oxfords, Sweep Sale, \$1.98

\$2.50 and \$2 Oxfords, Sweep Sale, \$1.48

\$3.50 and \$4 Oxfords, Sweep Sale, \$2.48



Ladies' Blucher kid Oxfords, hand-turned soles, stylish and durable shoes, worth \$2.00

Sweep Sale, \$1.45

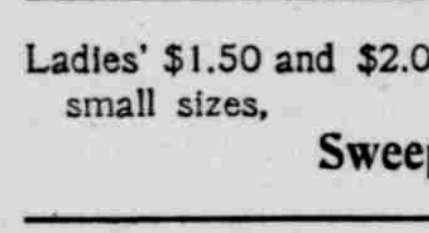


Ladies' kibo kid Shoes and Oxfords, all AA and A widths, \$3.50 to \$5.00 grades, good styles, Sweep Sale, \$1.25

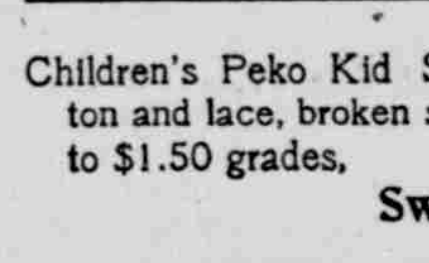
Men's \$1.50 Linen Shoes—Sweep Sale, 98c



Ladies' Linen Shoes and Oxfords, \$2.50 and \$3.00 grades, Sweep Sale, \$1.48



Ladies' \$1.50 and \$2.00 Oxfords, small sizes, Sweep Sale, 29c

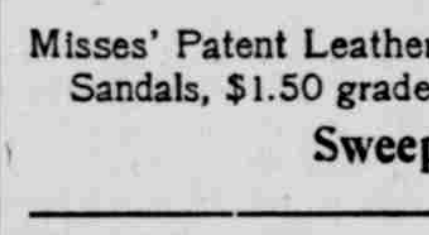


Children's patent leather Sandals, \$1.25 grade, Sweep Sale, 69c

Children's Peko Kid Shoes, button and lace, broken sizes, \$1.25 to \$1.50 grades, Sweep Sale, 68c

Children's Barefoot Sandals, Sweep Sale, 75c

Misses' size kid Strap Slippers, \$1.50 grades, Sweep Sale, 48c



Misses' Patent Leather Two-strap Sandals, \$1.50 grades—Sweep Sale, 98c

Misses' Peko Kid Lace Shoes, \$1.50 to \$2.00 grades, Sweep Sale, 89c

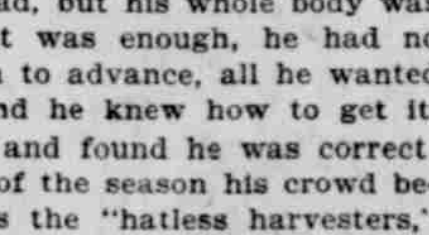


Men's \$3.00 Patent Leather Oxfords, all new shapes, Sweep Sale, \$1.98

Broken lines Men's swell Oxfords—all new, \$3.50 Oxfords, Sweep Sale, \$2.48

\$4.00 Oxfords, Sweep Sale, \$2.98

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mer. "Fresh air, sunlight and rain mean as much to hair as to any other growing crop," says one authority; so if we can overcome the wicked habit of wearing hats we may yet save the Nation.

A bald-headed man, no matter what his wealth or position, is a reproach to himself and to his country. No matter how brave his speech, in his heart he is wishing, aye, praying for a remedy that will restore his hair, and with them his self-respect. Luxuriant hair has been the symbol of physical strength, as well as the crowning beauty of men and women in all ages. It was not until Samson fell a victim to the wiles of his faithless Delilah that his strength and courage failed. The world never would have bowed before the power of Rome had her legions advanced with shining pates. Caesar's invasion of Britain had been a mere holiday excursion had he met a bald-headed foe; instead he encountered a race of men with manes like lions, and with hearts as brave. I would not say bald heads hold no patriotism, but I insist that the man possessed of a good head of hair carries in his heart a deeper love of country, and is swifter to rush to its defense.

I knew a farmer fifty years ago who never wore a hat when about his work; I remember him well, he was then a young man of forty with a heavy mat of dark

brown hair without a sign of gray. I used to watch him with a feeling little short of awe as he took up his march across the wide field, swinging his scythe with the steady motion of a machine, his dark hair waving in the breeze like a banner, which was usually interpreted by the rest of us as a challenge to equal his pace. Some of the boys used to "guy" him at times, but he knew a thing or two; he declared that not only his head, but his whole body was cooler and that was enough, he had no scientific reason to advance, all he wanted was comfort and he knew how to get it. Others tried it and found he was correct; before the end of the season his crowd became known as the "hatless harvesters," for in that day reaping machines were almost unknown; the neighbors formed little parties, going from one farm to another cleaning up the crops as they matured. I had the good fortune to meet this hero of my childhood a few days ago, now nearly ninety years of age, his hair as heavy, apparently, as in youth and only slightly gray; this he attributed to his lifelong habit of working in the fields with head uncovered.

I am assured by a medical friend that sunstroke, so called, would become a thing of the past if the old farmer's plan should become universal. In proof of his assertion he declared that the disease was a stranger to the Indians, although they passed their lives in the open air, with no other protection from the heat of the sun than that provided by nature.

Now let the students of the good old college take one more step and wage war on soft grub—"predigested foods," "ready to eat" stuff that requires no chewing—no digesting—and they will earn the title of blessed. Let these young men, molders of fashion, begin to eat raw wheat, parched corn, peanuts, hardtack—anything, in fact, that will give the jaws proper exercise and the teeth a chance to perform their duty as chief organs of digestion and the sad-eyed army of dyspeptics will be rapidly diminished, for this dread disease is not caused by what we eat, but by the way we eat. Food well masticated needs not to be followed by patent nostrums to complete the process of digestion or to assist in its assimilation. Teeth were made for use, and it is only by use that they can be kept sound and in good working order, but we may safely trust to Yale to save our teeth as well as our hair—she has gone too far to retreat.

IT'S GIBSON'S turn to sell you a Bicycle this year. Rumsey Bicycles, \$25.00 and they are guaranteed.

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